



JUNE  
2004

Monthly update  
to the Youth  
Action Council  
and Youth  
Service Teams

## THE YACKITY-YAC

### SPECIAL EDITION REGIONAL YOUTH SUMMIT REPORTS

Editor's Note: Since April of this year, five youth summits have been held across the state, in the communities of Salt Lake City, Logan, Provo, Blanding and St. George. These summits have brought together nearly 400 youth of diverse backgrounds, equipping them with leadership skills, instilling a desire for volunteer service, and building friendships. Read on to learn about each of the youth summits.

### Salt Lake City, Utah

The Salt Lake Youth Summit was held April 16-17, in conjunction with 4-H Leadermete. The Youth Summit planning team arranged the details for the following three projects:

#### Teen Orientation Activity and Dance

The purpose of this activity was to provide a fun and interactive environment for conference teens and adults as a kick off event for the activities.

#### Icebreaker Workshop

The teens organized and facilitated a workshop focused on trust, communication, teamwork, diversity and leadership. Many different activities occurred including a web initiative in which participants had to work together to lift people through the web, two icebreakers in which participants learned more about each other (skills and interests they had, what they felt about leadership and communication, the importance of those skills when dealing with people, etc), and an activity focused on diversity. Participants of all ages, 14 to 79, worked together to complete the planned workshop activities and the teens facilitated the entire workshop on their own.

#### Literacy Project:

Over 400 books were collected for the literacy project through Scholastic Books and Volunteers of America. The team ordered book bags and other small toys and gifts to pass out to participants. The team organized the project into sections for participants by creating an entrance area where children would pick up the book bags, take a picture with the Cat in the Hat, and color a card with their picture

in it. The next section held books and the children were able to pick out two books each, volunteers helped them select books and even read to some of the children. The last section consisted of projects and activities for the children to participate in including a book on gardening (the children listened to the story then were able to plant a seed and take it home), a book on butterflies (created butterflies out of coffee filters and pipe cleaners), a puppet show, and worked on several activities papers such as word searches and mazes focused on Dr. Seuss. Eight children from the Christmas Box House and fourteen children from the Salt Lake Housing Authority participated in the event.



Youth assist in lifting one of their peers through an intricate web during the teambuilding workshop.



The Yackity-YAC is published by the Utah Commission on Volunteers. Individuals who receive the YAC are asked to share the newsletter with others who are interested in youth service and volunteerism in Utah. For more information contact Kristi at 1-888-755-UTAH or [yes@utahspromise.org](mailto:yes@utahspromise.org)



## Provo, Utah

In Provo, volunteers of all ages gathered to serve on May 1, 2004, to celebrate Join Hands Day, a national day of service. 60 volunteers, from ages 8-71, gathered at the Provo City Council Chambers to bring literacy to children in their community.

Following inspiring remarks by Scott Snow, of the Commission on Volunteers, and Joyce Muhlestein, of the Commission on Literacy, volunteers quickly got to work assembling literacy backpacks. These backpacks teach about the importance of reading with children, and they will be distributed to low-income families. Other volunteers made literacy kits for local Head Start programs and Parent Education Resource Centers.

This event was a collaborative effort by the Provo City Youth Government, Utah Commission on Volunteers, United Way of Utah County, and Retired Senior Volunteer Program.



Volunteers of all ages in Utah County gathered to support Governor Walker's Read With a Child initiative.

"It's good to do something for others."  
-Join Hands Day volunteer



Volunteers assemble literacy backpacks, which will be used to teach the importance of reading.

Visit <http://utahspromise.org/ysu/> to see more pictures from each of the youth summits.

## Logan, Utah

The Cache County Youth Summit was held in conjunction with Join Hands Day on May 1st. The theme of the conference was Pay it Forward, and the 77 youth in attendance participated in workshops, service projects, volunteer recognition, as well as a fun movie and dance.

Service projects at the event were many and varied. Community members contributed donations for CAPSA (a safe house), ELC and Somebody's Attic. Summit participants assembled folder games, back to school kits and thank you cards for local agencies. Volunteers also assembled Amy's Smile care bags. These bags contain age-appropriate hygiene items and fun activities for infants, children and teenagers.

Featured presenters at the event included Carol Achziger (Youth and Adult Partnerships), Ronda Parsons (International Service Opportunities) and Amy Fielding (Stand For Decency).

"We were pleased with the results of the summit, especially considering the busy schedules of the planning committee and others," said Teisha Adams. "The dance was fun, and everyone enjoyed the workshops."

"I like to serve because it makes me feel good to know someone is going to be happy with my service."  
-Join Hands Day volunteer

Thanks again to our 2003 Utah Youth Summit sponsors: Utah 4-H, United Way of Salt Lake's Get UP and GO! program, and the Utah Family Center .

## Blanding, Utah

On May 7-8 the Eastern Regional Youth Summit was held in Blanding. The theme was SLASH, Serve Like a Super Hero, and over 90 youth were in attendance, many from the Navajo nation.

Participants were welcomed by an energetic John Paul Murphy, then had the opportunity to get to know each other better at a Hawaiian themed dance. On Saturday morning the youth rotated through three workshops presented by Heidi LeBlanc, Lamar Spotted Elk, and Kristi Tanner. Tauna Larson and the S.A.V.Y. team illustrated the importance of "Who I Am Makes a Difference", and then the youth headed out to participate in one of the following service projects:

Letters to the troops--Kids wrote letters to the troops, stationary was provided and they wrote two or three letters each. These have been sent overseas.

Trail of the Ancients--Kids helped build trails leading to the different exhibits (hauling gravel, spreading it out and then lining the trails with rocks).

Bike Trial--The College of Eastern Utah is making a bike trail in the canyon west of the college, and the kids helped clean up the area so the trails could be put in.

Dance with the Senior Citizens--Corsages and boutonnieres were made and presented to the residents of the nursing home and the kids had a fun time dancing and socializing. One boy said "this activity was so neat because the lady I was visiting with said, "You made me smile."

"This is what this is all about...seeing others in a new way and doing service for them."  
Tauna Larson

"The summit was great. All the speakers were super. They touched many, including me!"  
-Clarissa Kanell

Clarissa Kanell, Malaena Hymas, and Paula Porter addressing participants at the Southern Utah Youth Leadership Summit.



## St. George, Utah

The Southern Utah Youth Summit on June 3-5 brought together 100 youth from diverse organizations and several surrounding communities to the campus of Dixie State College for three days of fun, hard work and inspiration.

Youth Summit Steering Committee members chose the theme of "Stand Tall and Reach" for the Youth Summit. Workshop presenters like Brad Barton, Verne Larsen and Rhythm of Life reinforced the S.T.A.R. theme with motivational speeches that kept their audiences spell-bound. The Summit wasn't just all play and great food. On Friday, participants tackled several service projects including the daunting task of unloading hundreds of boxes of supplies for the Governor's Literacy Backpacks. Youth and adults were able to assemble nearly 1,000 of the backpacks which will be distributed to Spanish-speaking parents throughout the state, encouraging them to make reading to their children twenty minutes a day a priority in their homes.

Other service activities included painting toy cars for children in third world countries through the Happy Factory program; creating hygiene kits to be distributed to those in need on the Navajo reservation; becoming trainers for the Rhythms of Life program to train other youth in after-school programs; and visiting residents of St. George Care and Rehabilitation.

Another highlight of the Summit was the Friday night talent show which featured a dozen youth singing and performing solos and group numbers on guitar, piano and sax, followed by a dance.

On Saturday, the Steve and Lisa James Family impressed Summit attendees with their patriotic musical renditions and inspiring messages of being your best and reaching for the stars. "The Southern Utah Youth Summit was awesome!" reported Kathy Hyde. "I am so glad I was able to attend and see the results of everyone's hard work and great ideas! Congratulations to all of you in Southern Utah on a very successful Summit, hopefully the first of many annual events."

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

As the 2003-2004 Utah Youth Summit year draws to an end, I pause to reflect on the success that youth service in Utah has seen recently. In October, 38 participants were trained in youth adult partnerships, leadership skills and effective service during the Fifth Annual Utah Youth Summit held in Logan, Utah. Since that time, six teams of youth have been actively engaged in service across the state. Highlights of the past year include participation in the Festival of Trees by the Beaver team, the "Who I am Makes a Difference" campaign of the S.A.V.Y team, Salt Lake youth planning and facilitating a Barn Dance as a thank you for volunteers, a creative Hairy Pig fundraiser in Southern Utah, and participation in a national day of service in Logan and Provo.

The unifying element for each of the youth service teams was the planning and implementation of a regional youth summit. As you can see from this newsletter, the summits all varied in design, but the focus of each was the same: promoting service and enhancing leadership skills. Each summit was super successful, and I am so proud of all of you for the effort you put forth to make it such a success. Way to go!

This year also saw the inauguration of the Youth Service Utah awards. Winners included Kelsie Swindells, a 10-yr-old Salt Lake resident who, when she saw a need

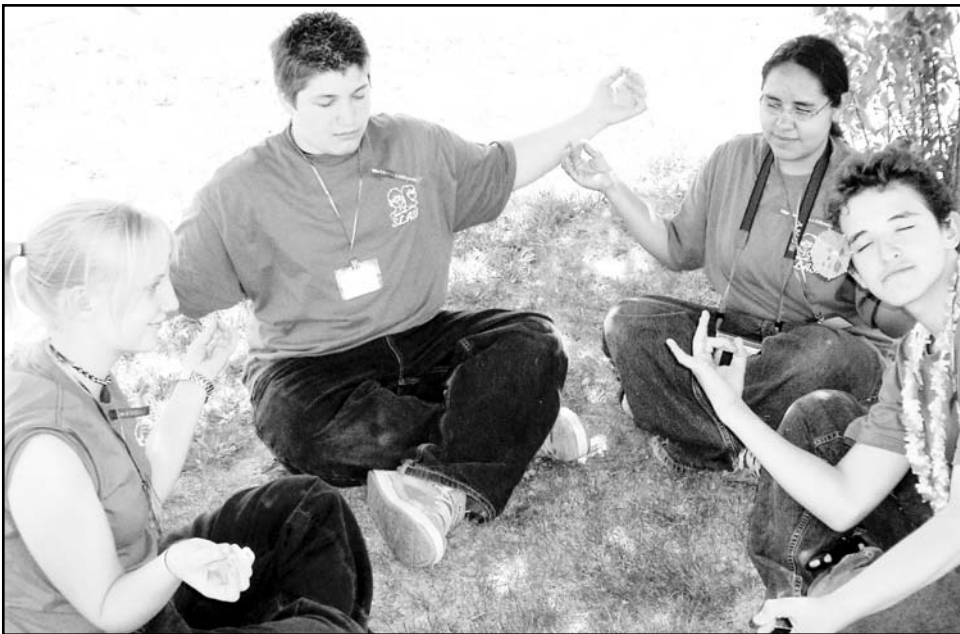
for recycling in her area, started a program collecting newspapers in her neighborhood on a weekly basis, recycling them, and donating the proceeds to a local elementary school. The winner of the group award, the Vietnamese Volunteer Youth, serve at the Utah Cultural Celebration Center, the Living Traditions Festival, the Vietnamese Community of Utah's annual New Year Celebration, the Odyssey House, and for members of the Vietnamese community who are in need.

In a recent study conducted by the Points of Light Foundation and Indiana University, Utah was found to lead the nation in volunteerism. The contribution of youth volunteers is undoubtedly a significant factor in Utah's number one ranking. Youth have energy and enthusiasm, and are capable of accomplishing great things. The future is in good hands with you as the next committed generation of volunteers!

I hope this newsletter has been helpful to you. You can stay in touch and receive the latest information on youth service in Utah by logging on to <http://utahspromise.org/ysu/>

I have enjoyed working with and getting to know each of you, and wish you all the best in your future endeavors. Keep the joy of service!

Kristi Tanner  
YES Ambassador



Members of the SAVY team relax after a busy day at the SLASH Youth Summit.

"It was a remarkable experience to spend two days with these amazing kids. They went to the midnight showing of Harry Potter 3, were in their places and fully attentive on Friday for the workshops, then had enough energy to dance until 11 pm. I'm exhausted, but it's a good feeling because we touched lots of kids in positive ways."  
-Linda Sappington

For the latest information on youth volunteerism in Utah and how you can get involved, log on to <http://utahspromise.org/ysu/>